

Grab Bag Friday: Community Supported Agriculture



Here I am, snowed in on March 2nd, with at *least* a full month of winter spread out in front of me, and I'm happily dreaming and scheming about Summer! That's because I just received an email from Hatchet Cove Farm, a local organic farm that we purchase a CSA share from. Lots of farmers will be gearing up for their summer CSA programs over the next few weeks...here's what it means:

CSA is Community Supported Agriculture. It means what it says. I, as a community member, buy a "share" from a local farm. In return, I get a big bag of fresh, delicious, organic vegetables delivered every week for

18 weeks during the summer season. Here's why it's great:

I get to...

- Eat healthy, nutritious food all summer long
- Try new things (I'd never had bok choy before...it's delicious in stir fry!)
- Know the farmer that grew my food
- Support local agriculture
- Keep my money in the local economy
- Eat fresh, unprocessed veggies

SIDE STORY: My husband, a Los Angeles native, had never had a cucumber that wasn't bought at the store. We got our first CSA with cucumbers and he crinkled his nose, "I hate cucumbers." *Until...*he tried a real, fresh cucumber. He was stunned that it tasted so good! He thought cucumbers just naturally grew with a bitter, waxy buildup on the skin, never realizing that that is actually *added* to the cucumber to make them look more appealing and last longer in the store. Thanks to Hatchet Cove Farm, we snacked on yummy cukes all summer long!

Here's an example of how it works. I'll use our CSA, Hatchet Cove Farm, as my example...the details of other CSAs will, of course, vary:

- **Share price:** \$270 for eighteen weeks of vegetable deliveries (mid-June to mid-Oct) is for a "two-person" share. If you love veggies or have a larger family, you may want to purchase two shares. *I think \$15 a week for fresh, homegrown veggies is a terrific deal!*
- **The Vegetables:** you receive a selection of in-season vegetables every week, including (but not limited to!) mesclun, spinach, and other early greens in the early summer. Peas, beans, broccoli, and early potatoes in the mid-summer. Zucchini, onions, peppers, and tomatoes in the late summer. Melons, corn, kale, and chard in the early fall.



- **Pickup/Delivery:** There are a few options for getting your veggies. Hatchet Cove Farm makes deliveries to the Rockland Unitarian church at 11am Sundays for people in the Rockland area. On Monday afternoons, they deliver shares to Waldoboro, Damariscotta, and Nobleboro. On Tuesday mornings, they deliver to

Josephine Cameron Johnson

SAMPLE: Hatchet Cove Farm promotion blog post

Woolwich and Brunswick/Topsham. On Thursday afternoons, they deliver to members in Friendship. And pickup at the farm in Warren or Friendship is always available. If you do not want your share on any given week, the folks at Hatchet Cove will be happy to donate your share to the Area Interfaith Outreach Food Pantry in Rockland.

- **Newsletter/Recipes:** Every week, along with your veggies, you receive a letter telling about activities and news from the farm, as well as recipes to help inspire you to use up every last vegetable.
- **Hatchet Cove Farm Meat:** CSA members get first dibs on purchasing farm-raised lamb and chicken!
- **Hatchet Cove Farm becomes your farm, too!:** Members are welcomed at the farm to volunteer or just to visit, and a potluck/garlic planting day happens every fall.

Sounds great right? So, how can you join a CSA?

You can find out about CSAs from local farmers by keeping an eye out on bulletin boards at your local grocery store, library, church, or community center. You can also do a quick online search for farms in your area at the [Eat Well Guide \(Wholesome Food from Healthy Animals\)](#). If you live in my area here in Maine, you can contact Hatchet Cove Farm by email: hatchetcovefarmATverizonDOTnet (you'll have to de-spamify that email address, of course).

Ah, summer dreams...